

Professional Review.

THE MEDICAL ANNUAL.

The "Medical Annual" for the present year, published by Messrs. J. Wright and Co., Bristol, price 7s. 6d., contains much useful information in regard to the evolution of knowledge, its object being briefly to condense and elucidate the additions which have been made to medical knowledge within the past year.

THE DICTIONARY OF REMEDIES.

Writing from the general standpoint, Dr. Hobart Amory Hare says:—"During the past year the methods of treating disease have been slowly but surely advanced along those lines of rational therapy which are so essential to success in the case of the individual patient and the true progress of medical practice . . . it is more the custom at present than formerly for the physician to study the patient, not only to determine what drugs and remedial measures should be employed, but—equally important—whether the condition is one which contra-indicates a remedy instead of indicating it."

The writer goes on to say that he is firmly convinced that we "stand on the threshold of the most important therapeutic discoveries in the history of medicine. Not that new remedies are to be produced to an extent exceeding the rapidity of to-day, for many of these are not as efficacious or as harmless as those of our forefathers; but rather that the theory of Ehrlich as to the cell, and its relation to poisons and anti-poisons, or some similar theory, will show us that the present empirical use of many valued drugs rests not so much on the fact that they are stimulants or depressants, alteratives or eliminants, as we call them, but upon their ability to aid the body in producing protective fluids or cells, or of putting aside the evil effects of toxic materials by locking up or destroying factors which, if free, would cause fatal consequences. Not ten years ago the cold bath in typhoid fever was used to reduce temperature; now the anti-pyretic effect of that measure is considered the least important factor in the case, and the redistribution of the blood, the oxidation of poisons and their elimination, are the objects sought by its employment.

The following note is worthy of attention:—"Now that the mosquito is recognised as being so important a factor in the spread of malarial infection the recommendation of McIntosh that oil of citronella be employed to protect the skin is worthy of some consideration. He employs oil of citronella and alcohol in equal parts, and directs that this mixture shall be applied freely to the skin wherever it is exposed to mosquito bites. When this is on the skin it is said that mosquitoes will not make an attack."

THE DICTIONARY OF TREATMENT.

"As 1901 might be described (in this country at least) as a tuberculosis year, so 1902 may be fitly designated a cancer year. . . . The obscurity enshrouding the nature and production of immunity is being gradually rolled away, and the past year has seen substantial progress made in our knowledge of this very intricate subject."

In regard to lung diseases we read:—"Not only have very active measures been taken to secure for the consumptive that environment which all experience proves necessary for him, but views of the etiology of phthisis are undergoing a change which will help forward this particular work. The discovery

of the tubercle bacillus led to a too exclusive view of the bacillus as the cause of tuberculosis. Under this impression, the destruction of the *bacillus* was to cure and prevent the *disease*. The tendency of more recent thought is to assign to the bacillus a place only amongst the conditions which tend to produce phthisis. As in most diseases it is necessary that two causes shall be acting together and come into juxtaposition before the result is produced, and while much good may be accomplished by attention to one of these causes, it is equally important that the others should not be neglected."

Amongst the remedies for tuberculosis, urea has had a prominent place in the writing of the past year, and so far the results have been very encouraging. Blue light has also attracted considerable attention. It is found that the blue light from a 32-candle power incandescent lamp will pass through the body of a patient and destroy bacilli placed at his back. Compression of the lung by means of injections of nitrogen gas in the pleural cavity is claimed to have produced some very remarkable results.

In the department of tropical medicine, the spread of disease by insects, such as mosquitoes, flies, fleas, bugs, and other animal parasites, constitutes the chief contribution of tropical pathologists to scientific medicine. At the present moment, malaria, filaria, and yellow fever are known to be conveyed by the bites of mosquitoes.

The exact method of the conveyance of plague has not yet been decided.

In regard to the wave of sleeping sickness which has spread over Central Africa, we read:—"In many districts it attacked half the population, and everyone attacked died. Unless the epidemic is stayed, the valley of the Nile and Eastern littoral of Africa are threatened with one of the most loathsome and deadly diseases which ever attacked mankind."

In regard to insanity, during the past year much useful work has been done in the field of clinical psychiatry. A large proportion of the work has consisted of researches concerning the bodily symptoms of mental disease, *e.g.*, alterations of the blood, pulse, pupils, cerebro-spinal fluid, urine, dermal appendages, &c.

In the gynæcological world, "the record consists mainly in steady pathological work, and in the gradual improvement of the technique of various operative procedures. Perhaps the most important matter to chronicle is the establishment beyond dispute of the occurrence of the ovarian form of extra-uterine pregnancy, of which some half-dozen authentic cases are now on record.

The chief merit of this important advance is undoubtedly due to Mdlle. Catherine van Tusschenbroek, of Amsterdam, whose beautiful preparations were the first to demonstrate an ovarian pregnancy beyond the possibility of doubt.

Up to the present, the pathology of blackwater fever has, Dr. James Cantlie says, not been settled. He reports that Dr. R. O. Moffat, C.M.G., draws attention to what he calls a frequent error in diagnosis, namely, that the temperature very often remains normal, or even sub-normal, at a time when the patient's symptoms and the state of his blood would point to the fact that a malarial attack has already begun. Dr. Moffat has expressed the belief that blackwater fever is due to a chill acting at a certain

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